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Among the Indians of Western  
New York.\*\*\*\*\*

PAPER Read by Rev. Father  
James T. Dougherty, at a  
Meeting of The Canandaigua  
Scientific Association, December  
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Long before the days of Red Jacket or the White Woman of the Genesee, long before the army of Sullivan swept across these regions, devastating the Indian towns and avenging the massacres of Cherry Valley and Wyoming, more than two hundred years ago, the black gown pale face came into the wild forests of Western New York, not in quest of land or treasure, but for the love of souls, to civilize and Christianize the red children of the forest. These priests had come from Old France to New France, as Canada (with very indefinite southern limits) then was known, and laboring among the Indians of Lower Canada and the Hurons and Algonquins farther west, had gradually worked along toward the great Iroquois Confederation, which then occupied the major portion of what is now New York State.

They were Jesuits, followers of that great religious leader, Ignatius Loyola, with the story of whose life we are more or less familiar. A Spanish soldier wounded in the siege of Pampeluna, he

passes his time in the hospital reading the lives of the saints. They inspire him with new and loftier ideals. He will organize an army for God. The breaches in the walls of the Church of Rome, upon which Luther and Calvin had made such fierce inroads, must be repaired; new lands must be won to the Church. His men must move with military precision and obedience. To the three ordinary vows of submission, chastity, and poverty, he will add another of unquestioning readiness to the command of the Roman Pontiff. These were the men educated in the school of Loyola. After long years of preparation, imbued with his motives of zeal and self sacrifice, they came among the tribes in the new, strange land of America. And while France and England were marshaling their forces for the political conquest of these regions, as the author of "The Holland Purchase" tells us, this was the battle ground, too, on which was fought the fight for religious supremacy two centuries ago between Luther and Loyola, between Protestantism and Catholicity.

#### THE JESUIT RELATIONS.

The letters written from time to time by these missionaries to their superiors in Paris were gradually collected and compiled, and form the vast work known as "The Jesuit Relations," our almost solitary source of original information, but one quite exhaustive as bearing upon the habits, manners of life, social, political, military, and religious characteristics of our Indian predecessors in that remote period. To the student of Indianology this work is a priceless treasure, and the library of no Western New York historical society would be complete without it. The French text with an English translation was edited a few years ago by Reuben

Gold Thwaites, secretary of the Wisconsin Historical Society, in seventy-three volumes, and from these I venture to draw some narratives on the Indian missions of Ontario and adjoining counties.

To this we should add that Rev. Dr. Charles Hawley, of Auburn, Rev. Dr. Thomas Donahue, of Buffalo, and John Gilmary Shea, of New York, have written extensively on the subject of Indian Mission History in New York State, drawing no doubt from this source of "The Relations." All these confess indebtedness to General John S. Clark, the eminent surveyor and antiquarian of Auburn, who has located the Jesuit and Sulpician missions and the scenes of important events in our early history.

#### THE IROQUOIS VILLAGES.

There were three villages in the Cayuga country pleasantly situated on the borders of Lake Cayuga or on the banks of the Seneca river. Cayuga (St. Joseph's), the principal village, was situated about three and one-half miles south of Union Springs, near Great Gully brook. Tiehero was ten miles distant, on the east side of Seneca river at the northern extremity of Cayuga lake. A smaller village, Onontare (St. Rene), was situated at a place known as Fort Hill, in the town of Savannah, Wayne county.

The Cayugas were at continual war with the powerful Andastes, from the region of the Susquehanna; and many of them left their pleasant homes near Lake Tiehero, in 1665, and removed to the northern shores of Lake Ontario, where they would be free from the attacks of their enemies. These emigrants were probably from the smaller villages of Tiehero and Onontare, as these were weaker and more liable to an attack. They gradually came back to their old

homes, and in 1676 they had built new towns near Tiehero lake, about a mile eastward of Cayuga. Here Greenhalgh found them in 1677. "The Cayugas," he says, "have three towns about a mile distant from one another; they are not stockaded. They intend the next spring to build all their houses together and stockade them; they have abundance of corn; they lie within two or three miles of the Lake Tiehero."

The Senecas occupied the valley of Genesee, and their territory extended to the lands of the Onondagas in the east and the Cayugas in the southeast, whilst the Genesee river at this time formed the western limit of their domain. They had four large villages, which formed the angles of a square, and they also had several hamlets, which were located in different places for convenience in hunting and fishing. Their villages were situated about twenty miles from Lake Ontario, which was reached by trails to the head of Irondequoit Bay, and great trails led from their towns to the neighboring nations.

Blacksmith, an old Seneca chief, gave the names and described the location of the villages for Mr. Marshall, as he learned them from the traditions of his race. The villages were: Ga-o-sa-eh-ga-aah, at Boughton Hill, south of Victor; De-yu-di-haah-do, about ten miles south of Rochester; Chi-nos-hah-geh, four miles southeast of Victor; Deodonset, five miles southeast of Avon Springs. The names, however, which the missionaries used to designate these villages were probably derived from the Mohawk tongue, and were: Gannagaro, or Gandagaro (St. James'); Gandachioragou (Immaculate Conception); Gannougaræ, or Gandougaræ (St. Michael's); Gannounata (St. John's).

Gannagaro was a very large village of about one hundred and fifty houses and

had a population of 2,000 or 3,000, as each long house was the home of from two to six families. It was situated on a large hill, now Boughton Hill, which rises immediately south of the New York Central station at Victor.

About one mile and a quarter westerly, on an eminence, called by the early settlers, "Fort Hill," was a fortified enclosure, which could be used as a place of protection for women and children in case of an attack on Gannagaro.

Gannagaro was called St. James' by the Jesuits, and it was Ga-o-sa-eh-ga-ah in the Seneca tongue. The Rev. James Pierron came here in 1672, as the first resident missionary.

Gannougarae, or Gandougarae, was about four miles southward of Gannagaro, on the banks of a stream called Mud creek, in the northeast part of the present town of East Bloomfield. Driving from Cauandaigua about five miles on the North Bloomfield road one crosses the stream known as Mud creek. Less than a quarter of a mile from this point on the east bank of the creek, and just beyond the confluence of a small tributary, is located the site of this village and missionary chapel. It was called St. Michael's by the Jesuits, and was composed almost entirely of Huron, Neuter, and Onnontiogaa captives. A large number of these Hurons were Christians, and it was here that Father Fremin established his residence in the fall of 1669. A chapel was soon built, as we shall see, and Father Fremin said his first mass here November 3, 1669.

In the language of the Senecas, it was called "Chi-nos-hah-geh," which means "on the slope of the valley." The town was destroyed by fire in the spring of 1671, but was soon rebuilt, probably on another site, two miles nearer the village of Gannagaro.

Another large town, which has been called by various names, was situated about ten miles west of Gannagaro in a large bend of the Honeoye creek, north of the present village of Honeoye Falls, and near Rochester Junction on the Lehigh. Although there seems to be some confusion of names among authorities on the subject, yet this apparently was the Gandachioragou of the Jesuits, the Tangorondies of Hennepin, the Totiakton of Denonville, and the Deyudehaakdah of the Senecas. It was one of the most populous of the Seneca towns. The houses were very large, being fifty or sixty feet in length, with room for ten or twelve families in each house.

Many vestiges of former Indian towns have been found at Lima, and also on the main road between Lima and Honeoye Falls. These places were known to the early settlers as Indian burial grounds, and many relics have been found to show that they were formerly the sites of Seneca towns.

Gandachioragou was probably the Seneca capital, and it was situated on a hill at or a little to the north of Lima. It was here that Father Garnier located and spent twenty years of missionary life. The town was sometimes called Tagorondies, because this was the name of the chief. It was also called Totiakton, but as this is the Iroquois word for trout, this name may have been given to the town when it was moved to the banks of Honeoye creek, which is noted still as the place of the trout.

There was a fourth village, called Gannannata by Denonville, and Dyudoosot by the Senecas, which was located a few miles south of Gandachioragou, but the furrows of the ploughman and the dwellings of the paleface have covered the vestiges of Sonnon-touan towns. There was no chapel at



this village, but the Fathers often came here on their ministrations of mercy and grace.

When LaSalle and Galinee came to Gandagaro, in 1669, the town was enclosed by a palisade, but when Greenhalgh came, in 1677, not one of the Seneca towns was thus fortified, so the location of the town was changed during this period.

After the country was devastated by Denonville, the eastern Seneca towns moved eastward toward Canandaigua and Geneva, and the western group moved south and west toward the Genesee. There was a small village of Senecas near the mouth of Niagara river, on the Canadian side, although they probably dwelt on the New York State side at an earlier period.

A FEW WORDS ON THE PAGAN INDIAN'S  
NOTION OF RELIGION.

Every Indian had a particular manitou which each one selected by fasting for eight days, and at the end of this fast whatever first came to mind was a symbol of his manitou, or Okki. The manitous manifested their will and pleasure in dreams, and the Indians believed that they were under a most solemn and sacred duty to do whatever was revealed to them in this manner, being ready to sacrifice their own lives or the lives of others to fulfill the commands of their manitou.

During their festivities they dressed in a fantastic manner, covered their faces with bark masks and went about at night from cabin to cabin with torches, breaking whatever they could lay hands on and compelling people to give them objects they might desire, or to do what they commanded to fulfill their dreams. They acted like veritable demons, and many took advantage of this occasion to gratify their passions of hatred, lust, or revenge.

The Iroquois believed in the existence of the soul as a spiritual entity, but they could not exactly define its nature. They called it "Ganno-gour-ha," and "Erienta;" but these appellations do not signify being, but action, as the former expresses the operations of spirit and mind, and the latter the operations of heart and will. They do not understand that the soul is purely spiritual, but a kind of Egyptian double or shadow of one's self. They believe that the soul is immortal and that after death it will begin its long and weary journey to the happy hunting ground, or eternal home, far to the westward, over rocky paths, through briars and thorns, until it comes to a deep river, where the only passageway, a fallen tree, is disputed by an immense dog or beast that threatens to devour the soul, or cast it into the flood, where it is whirled by the waters over precipices and rocks. After passing this river the souls are judged and sent to a place of torments or delights, according as the individual was good or bad in this life. The delights of their heaven consist in good hunting, in good fishing, in singing and dancing at eternal feasts in the presence of their gods. The virtues which merit such reward are bravery in war, skill in hunting, and excessive cruelty to enemies and captives. The old and feeble, and little children, who are unable to walk to the happy hunting ground, are heard sighing around the cabins in the moaning of the winds, in the sougling of the forest, and in the rustling of the leaves.

They believe also that the soul acts independently of the body and makes long journeys at will through the air, and to most hidden places, and as it is a spirit, nothing can arrest its progress; yet it does not cease to animate the body, but makes these

journeys when the body is asleep. This explains why they are so infatuated with dreams, as they believe their dreams are actual occurrences, and are the doings of the soul while the body sleeps.

THE FIRST HOUSE OF WORSHIP.

In 1655 Frs. Chaumonot and Dablon came to Onondaga, near what is now Syracuse. The Fathers had constructed a little bark chapel with the assistance of the Indians, and this first house of worship erected in the State of New York and dedicated to the service of God was named St. John the Baptist, and the whole country was placed under the protection of the same saint. In the following spring the Iroquois again insisted on the fulfillment on the part of the French, of the agreement to establish a colony at Onondaga, so Father Dablon started for Quebec to induce the Governor to carry out this condition of Peace.

When in 1657 Father Chaumonot left Father Mesnard at Cayuga, he proceeded with a young Frenchman, David LeMoyne, along the Indian trail to the Seneca towns. The Seneca country was more fertile than the territory of the other Iroquois nations, and the inhabitants were very numerous, comprising nearly half the population of the entire league. At this time there were two large villages and many smaller ones. One of these villages was composed entirely of Hurons, a majority of them being Christians, and was christened by Chaumonot St. Michael's. The missionary assembled the ancients of the principal village, Gannagaro, and eloquently addressed them on the Christian religion, and proffered three beautiful presents as pledges of his sincerity and the truth of his words. He told them that neither he nor his companions would leave the comforts and luxuries

of their own beautiful land, and would come so far and endure the hardships of Indian life to teach falsehood. According to their custom they held a council, at which they decided to accept his teaching, and requested him to remain and instruct them. He also visited the other villages, where he instructed and baptized some; but it was at the Huron village of St. Michael that he met with a warm welcome and found consolation in the lives of the Christians, who remained faithful to the teachings of the missionaries during all the years of their captivity. Notwithstanding the bad example of the pagans that surrounded them they hastened to the missionary to get absolution for themselves and baptism for their children.

THE FIELD INVITING AND THE PROSPECTS BRIGHT.

Although the field seemed inviting and the prospects bright for introducing Christianity among the Senecas, yet the Fathers were too few to supply permanent missionaries to the different villages, and as each of the four nations had formally invited them they could not postpone at least a first visit without offense, so Chaumonot was obliged to leave the Seneca country to hasten to the Oneidas.

He had labored about two months among the Senecas and the Huron Christians on this first visit, baptizing many children and some adults, and on his return to Cayuga he took Father Mesnard from his little chapel on the banks of Lake Tiehero to accompany him on his visit to the Oneida territory.

The missionaries met with success in all the villages in which they labored, but it was at Onondaga, where two of the Fathers were incessantly employed, that the best results of their work were visible, as here: "The divine office is

recited, the sacraments are administered, and Christian virtues are practiced with as much modesty, care, and fervor as they are in the most Catholic and devout provinces of Europe." More than two hundred were baptized in a short time, and of this number five were the most prominent personages of the village. "Most of the children learn the catechism, most of the dying become Christians, and all receive us joyfully in their cabins."

A DANGEROUS MISSION.

The mission to the Iroquois was considered the most dangerous (according to letter of LeMercier to the Superior in France, June 6, 1656,) but also the most glorious and important of all the fields of labor of the Jesuits in New France. The Neros and Diocletians never invented more cruel tortures for the early Christians than those which these savages inflicted upon some of the Jesuit Fathers; yet others were ever ready to take the places of the martyred missionaries, never doubting that God who made most illustrious apostles out of the most bitter prosecutors of his Church would some day make docile disciples out of these barbarous foes.

A delegation of Cayugas and Onondagas went to Montreal (1661). They wanted the Sisters to come to establish a hospital for the care of the sick and a convent for the education of their daughters. They were no longer, they said, savages, but Christians, as there were more Christians than Pagans at Onondaga, where one of the principal chiefs rang the bell every morning to call the Christians to prayer. Father LeMoyne was prepared to risk his life in the interests of harmony and religion, and he returned to Onondaga with the Iroquois.

The Mohawks and the Oneidas would not join the other nations of the Iro-

quois in proposals of peace, but they were not so much to be feared if peace could be established with the latter, and the French hoped to reduce them to subjection as soon as reinforcements arrived from France.

The Fathers also hoped to establish extensive missions among the Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas as soon as they could safely visit these nations, as there were already many Christians among them, and many others were well disposed toward the Faith.

#### FRENCH CAPTIVES RELEASED.

LeMoyne came to Onondaga principally to save some French prisoners, but he found the Christian Indians so anxious to receive his ministrations that he prolonged his visit into the following summer.

The Christian Hurons and Iroquois came from Oneida and Cayuga, under the pretext of trading, in order to receive the sacraments, and as the missionary had full liberty to mingle with the people, he was kept busy attending their spiritual wants. He visited Cayuga and remained four or five weeks among the Christian Hurons and Iroquois, who were delighted with his visit and profited by his presence by receiving the sacrament. He baptized about two hundred during the year he remained in the country, and he found that the Christians were generally firm in their faith, even in the midst of persecution. Garakontie secured the release of eighteen French captives, and with these Father LeMoyne returned to Montreal in August, 1662, after an absence of more than a year. His visit to Onondaga averted war for the time and it gave the French farmers an opportunity to till their fields.

During these years of warfare, the Christians in the Iroquois country, though deprived of missionaries, enli-

vened their faith by prayers. There were French prisoners who raised their mutilated and fingerless hands to God in prayer, there were Huron captives who proclaimed the name and faith of Jesus Christ, and there were Iroquois preachers as well as persecutors of the faith.

Garakontie, at Onondaga, though not yet baptized, assembled the Christians by the sound of the bell every morning and evening for prayers, and he frequently invited them to some banquet or feast to encourage them in the practice of their religious duties. Some of the women often met at the cabin of some pious Christian to recite the rosary or to listen to a rehearsal of the teachings of the Jesuit Fathers, and they brought their children to some prominent Catholic Indian to have them baptized. One of the Huron Christian captives among the Mohawks kept account of the Sundays, so that the Christians might observe the day by prayer.

Onondaga was the central nation of the Iroquois and the capital of the league, and here every year delegates from the other nations assembled to discuss matters of state, to allay any internal dissensions and to maintain the sovereignty of the league. It was here also that the Fathers had formed their first and most flourishing church about ten years before, and they longed to revisit the scene of their former labor and hasty flight, to revive the drooping spirit of charity, and to reillumine the fading light of Faith. Father Julien Garnier therefore, who had gone to Oneida to assist Father Bruyas, hastened to Onondaga, where he was most joyfully welcomed. The famous Garakontie soon had a chapel ready for the Father, and when he had provided everything necessary for this new mis-

sion he hastened to Quebec with some other prominent men of his nation to bring back another apostolic laborer for this promising field. After exchanging presents with the French, Garakontie returned to Onondaga in September with Father Stephen Carheil and Father Peter Millet.

FATHER CARHEIL AMONG THE CAYUGAS.

Father Stephen Carheil left his companion Father Millet, at Onondaga to assist Father Garnier and proceeded to the Cayuga villages, about seventy miles distant. The Cayugas, as a nation, had never borne arms against the French, but had manifested a friendly feeling towards them and a disposition to accept the teachings of the missionaries. The chief, who had been the host of Father Mesnard ten years before, came with other prominent men of the nation to ask for a priest to bring back the light of faith to their homes. Father Carheil, accompanied by Father Garnier, reached the Cayuga nation November 6, 1668, and immediately began missionary labors by instructing and baptizing a female captive slave who was that day burnt at the stake and devoured by these cannibals. Father Garnier gave two presents to the nation, one to ask for a chapel, another to invite them to accept Christianity. The chiefs replied by two presents, expressing their acceptance of the faith and their willingness to build a chapel. The chapel was ready by November 9, and was dedicated by Father Carheil to St. Joseph. Father Carheil had a particular reverence for St. Catherine, and on her feast day, November 25th, many of the Cayugas came to be instructed in the faith, so the Father looked upon this day as the birthday of his little church.

Many of the young men were absent on war, fishing, or hunting expeditions,



but the rumors of an invasion by their old enemies, the Andastes, soon gathered them around their homes, when Father Carheil had an opportunity of explaining the Christian religion and of gaining their affection by the courage he manifested in danger and by his sympathy for their cause. He remained on guard with the sentinels at night, and as the Indians admired courage they manifested gratitude for his interest in their cause, and their respect for his person, at a public banquet.

The Father turned their admiration for his courage to good account, as he went about among the people telling them that good Christians had no reason to fear death. Why should they fear? They believed in God, they loved Him, and they obeyed Him; and after death they would be eternally happy in Heaven. "But you, my friends, should fear death, because until now you have not known God, nor have you loved or obeyed him, and should you die without baptism, without believing in or loving God, you would be forever miserable." He told the warriors he would prefer death to seeing them die without baptism, and, as this was the eve of the expected battle, he said he would be on the field the next day to confer this grace upon the wounded who wished to die as Christians.

FATHER FREMIN CALLED TO THE  
SENECAS.

Ambassadors from the Senecas came to Montreal, November 10, 1663, to ask for priests to come and instruct their people, and they sent a beautiful gift to the Governor as an evidence of this good will. They had also sent representatives to Father Fremin in the Mohawk country to induce him to come and dwell among them, and as Father Pierron had returned from Quebec, and

as there were many Huron Christians among the Senecas, Father Fremin left the Mohawk Valley early in October, 1668, for the Seneca nation.

The Seneca territory presented a vast field for the labors of the zealous missionaries, as more than half the population of the league dwelt in the valley of the Genesee and there was an entire village of Hurons and other captives a few miles southeast of the present village of Victor (Mud Creek), where there were many Christians who still preserved the faith they had received in their old Huron homes and only needed the presence of a priest to revive their former fervor.

#### FATHER FREMIN'S VISITATIONS.

Father Fremin was the Superior of all the Iroquois missions, and he visited the scenes of labor of all the other Fathers on his way to the Seneca nation, which he reached on the first day of November, and was received with all the honor which these people are accustomed to bestow upon ambassadors of powerful nations. A chapel was soon built and a little congregation of Huron Christians gathered around their pastor to renew their fervor and revive their faith; but the greatest obstacle to the propagation of the faith here, as in the other nations, was war, as then all the young men were absent and the older ones would not engage in any important affair or listen to any matter affecting the life, traditions, and customs of their people without consulting the warriors of their race. The Senecas were then at war with the Ottawas, the Mohigans, and the Andastes, yet Father Fremin was kept busy encouraging the Christians, visiting and instructing some, and preparing the sick for baptism and Christian death. In four months he baptized sixty persons; but

most of these were the children of Christian parents or sick and dying pagans.

The chiefs built a chapel for the missionary and the people came in numbers to listen to his teaching. The Senecas were laboring to establish peace with the French, and they were willing, through motives of policy, to assist the Father in his work, but the sorcerers wielded all their vast influence to restrain the people from living according to the Christian law.

The Father's first care was for the sick, and as one of the periodic epidemics was ravaging the towns he was kept busy visiting the dying to prepare them for Christian death.

In such a large field the duties were too onerous for one priest, so Father Garnier came from Onondaga to help his superior minister to the sick. As soon as the epidemic ceased the Fathers began to give instruction in their humble little chapel, but from the naturally stoic indifference of the Indian they could not tell whether their teachings made any impression upon the hearts of their hearers.

#### PROGRESS OF THE MISSIONS.

At the close of the year 1668, Jesuit priests were laboring in each of the Iroquois nations; in each nation there was an humble chapel where mass was said nearly every morning, and on Sundays and on the great festivals of the church the mass was solemnized by the singing of hymns by these rude children of the forest, and in each nation there was a little congregation of old Huron Christians and Iroquois converts who learned the doctrines of the church and directed their lives according to the teaching of Christ. The fathers gave instructions every day, and in some places twice a day, to the children and adults, and they found that the Indians were capa-

ble of understanding the great truths of Christianity.

Every morning after mass the Fathers went through the villages to visit the sick, to instruct them and to prepare them for baptism and consequent membership in the vast multitudes of the church militant. Many of the greatest men among the Iroquois believed in the teachings of the Fathers, but they deferred their conversion to the last hour through fear of the taunts of their friends or because they found difficulty in overcoming the pagan vices of a lifetime.

#### PREPARING PRISONERS FOR DEATH.

One of the most important duties of the fathers was the salvation of the souls of prisoners destined for death. The Iroquois burned many of their prisoners at the stake; and their contact with Europeans had not, at that time, mitigated the cruelty or lessened the demoniac tortures they inflicted on their unhappy victims. It was the height of Indian heroism to bear these tortures without flinching and to hurl defiance at their inhuman tormentors; but the Jesuits came teaching the dying to be meek and humble, to forgive their enemies, and to prepare even at that last hour to meet their Sovereign Judge. Often then amid the roaring of the flames and the demoniac yells of these savage torturers, might have been heard the prayer of the victim imploring forgiveness for his own sins and mercy for his tormentors, whilst the Jesuit stood near to encourage the dying Christian to persevere and to suggest thoughts and prayers in keeping with a Christian death.

The fathers spent their evenings in their little cabins, preparing, with light of pine knots, a dictionary of the lan-

guage, or translating their instructions into the Indian tongue.

#### MUCH OPPOSITION TO THE FATHERS.

Although many of the prominent men of the Iroquois nations favored the teaching of Christianity, yet the fathers encountered much opposition, for they had to contend against long established practises that formed a part of the Indian social and religious life. The dream-theory, or the necessity of fulfilling dreams, was observed in every village. The medicine men, or sorcerers, pretended by incantations and magic power to cure diseases and to guide the weal of their fellow men, and very many were addicted to excessive drinking of liquor, which threatened the ruin of the entire league.

Father Carheil's little congregation at Cayuga began to increase slowly in numbers, and it had not only women and children as members but some of the warriors also became humble followers of Christ. Two of the most celebrated chiefs at Cayuga attended the services in the chapel and the instruction of the father, for the purpose of becoming members of his flock. Many learned the prayers and the commandments, but the priest would not admit adults to baptism without a long period of probation.

Besides the town of Cayuga, which was the seat of the mission, there were two other villages, in which the father was obliged to labor and which afforded him an ample field for his zeal. These other towns were situated on the Seneca river, ten and fifteen miles distant respectively from Cayuga, and were inhabited by Cayugas, captive Hurons, and Andastes.

The vicissitudes of missionary life may be seen from the following: As Fremin and Garnier were passing through Gandagaro (Boughton Hill),

the large eastern Seneca village, on their return, a young warrior savagely attacked Garnier and threatened to kill him, and would, no doubt, have made good his threat had not others intervened to save the missionary's life. They reached Gandachioragou (Lima), however, in safety the seventh day of September, and soon after Father Garnier took charge of this mission.

THE MISSION ON MUD CREEK.

The origin of the mission on Mud creek, near the North Bloomfield road, five miles west of Canandaigua, is described as follows: Father Fremin was delayed some time on account of sickness, but on September 27, 1669, he started for Gandougaræ, where he was to make his future home. The old Hurons were delighted to have a priest dwell among them and they even gently reproved him for tarrying so long with the pagans of the western town, while there were so many Christians at Gandougaræ anxiously awaiting his arrival. The good Christians began the erection of a pretty little chapel, where they might hear mass and the word of God, and Father Fremin went about among his flock to learn their wants and the condition of his mission. The chapel was ready Sunday, November 3, 1669, and it was filled with Christians who came to revive their faith, and with pagans who came to satisfy their curiosity. The oldest of the Huron Christians taught the catechism, and the children vied with their parents in bringing their companions to pray.

Father Fremin found his greatest consolation among the Senecas in his little congregation of old Huron Christians at Gandougaræ (Mud Creek). These Christians had not forgotten the doctrines they had been taught in their old homes and they came again to the foot of the altar to renew their faith and to

thank God for the presence of a priest. They made open profession of this faith, and the purity of their lives made a very favorable impression upon the minds of the pagans.

#### EXEMPLARY AND SAINTLY HURONS.

Many of the Christian Hurons at Gandougaræ were very exemplary and even saintly in their lives, and through the long years of their desolation, they kept alive the spirit of faith by repeating the truths taught them by the Jesuits in their old home, by acts of piety, and by prayers. Two of the old men were especially noted for their holy lives and the pagans as well as the Christians were edified by their good example. One of these old men, James Atondo, was noted for his spirit of prayer and for his zeal in proclaiming the name of God. He accepted the law of God as the guide of his life and he sought to convince his pagan friends of the benefit to be derived from prayer. He told the pagans that they gave banquets and presents and went to much trouble to propitiate the dream-spirit so they might be successful in fishing, in hunting, and in war; yet they were in want, whilst disease and war carried off some of their finest men. He did not believe in fulfilling dreams but prayed to God for guidance and help, and God blessed him with a vigorous old age and an abundant supply of fish and game. He was comfortably situated in this world and hoped to be happy with God in the next.

Francis Tehoronihonga was another noted and exemplary member of Father Fremin's little flock at Mud Creek. He was intelligent, and well instructed, as he was formerly the host of Father Le-Moyne (near Syracuse), and he taught the doctrine of the church to every member of his household. For more than twenty years, he never neglected

his daily prayers, and every day he besought God to preserve his life until he could again see a priest and receive the Sacraments of the church. He had the firmest hope that his prayers would be heard. He could not believe that God would call him to Christianity and allow him to die without its blessings. When he heard of the arrival of Father Fremin, he exclaimed: "God has at length heard my prayer!" In speaking of his dead relatives he said: "Why should I grieve over their departure? My mother died shortly after receiving baptism and most of my relatives received the sacraments before death and I hope they are now happy in heaven." Every member of his family who died when a priest was not near, made a confession of sin and endeavored to excite in his heart perfect sorrow for the past. The greatest affliction of his life, he said, was caused by the bad conduct of one of his sons who led a very bad life and died without having been reconciled with God. He had then one son living and, although this one had gone on the war-path, yet as he had received the Sacrament of penance from Father Fremin before his departure, if death should come, it would not find him entirely unprepared.

Francis knew many of the Bible narratives and the miracles and parables of the Gospel and delighted to recite these for the edification of his neighbors and friends, and in this manner he paved the way for the teaching of the fathers.

It was a very difficult and tedious task to imbue the minds of these savages with pure thought and Christian principles, as these were contrary to all their traditions, modes of life and forms of thought; and they were apt to confound their Indian belief with Catholic truth. As an instance of this confusion



Father Fremin relates the peculiar notion an Iroquois woman had of Heaven. The daughter of this woman died a Christian and as this family was quite prominent in the nation, the girl had twenty slaves to do her bidding. So she was never obliged to carry wood or water or do any manual labor in this world, and as she was the only member of the family in Heaven, she would then be compelled to cook for herself and do all the drudgery, so this kind mother requested the missionary to baptize a female slave who was dying, so that she might be a servant to her child in Heaven.

ST. MICHAEL'S DESTROYED BY FIRE.

The town of Gandougaræ (St. Michael's) was entirely destroyed by fire in the spring of 1670 and the inhabitants lost all their provisions and personal property. Yet their greatest loss seemed to be the chapel. They said the destruction of their own homes was a merited punishment for their opposition to the Gospel, and they promised to erect a handsome chapel for the fathers as soon as they could provide shelter for themselves and protection against their enemies.

Father Fremin left the Seneca mission this year, 1670, to take charge of a little mission at Prairie de la Madelaine. But it does not appear that the mission was neglected, as we find that Father Raffeix took charge of the mission of the Immaculate Conception towards the end of July, 1672, and Father Garnier attended St. Michael's and St. James' (Mud Creek and Boughton Hill). There was no chapel at St. James, in 1672 and many of the people were obliged to go to St. Michael's on Sundays for instruction and mass.

The year 1673 was one of the most peaceful and prosperous the missionaries enjoyed in the Seneca Country. The

Christians were faithful in attending the chapels and receiving the sacraments. The pagans also came to hear the sermons and to pray and many of them would no doubt become members of the church, but they would not abandon the superstitious practices of their race and especially the Magic of the medicine men, as they knew no other way of healing the sick.

Garnier was so busy at St. Michael's that he had little time to attend St. James, so he asked for another Father to take charge of the latter mission and Rev. James Pierron came as the first resident missionary of this populous town.

Father Garnier says: It is not immorality or vice, but their false ideas of Christianity, that keep many of the Senecas out of the church, for I know more than 200 families who lead comparatively good lives and who would make exemplary Christians.

Father Garnier had convinced the people of Gandougaræ of the evil of liquor drinking, and drunkenness was very rare in the town, but the pagans still clung to their immoral dances, and sorcery and attachment to these customs withheld many from the church.

#### POLITICAL INFLUENCES.

Meanwhile political influences were at work for the supremacy of this region. This was disputed territory for which the French on the North and the English on the South and East were contending. Governor Dongon of New York claimed all south of the lakes as English territory, and taught the Iroquois that English supremacy was necessary to protect them from the rapacity of the French. The Christian Iroquois had the greatest faith in the missionaries and love and reverence for them, but the pagans remembered many hostile deeds of the French, favored the English and the banishment

of the French fathers from this land. The Fathers, seeing the powers that were at work against them, induced many of their spiritual children to abandon their homes and even their kindred and to emigrate to the new Catholic Indian settlements near Montreal. This desertion of the Catholic Iroquois was opposed by their pagan brethren and used as a pretext by the English for impugning the influence of the fathers.

The Senecas interfered with the fur trade carried on between the friendly Indians and the French, and various other causes of misunderstanding and dispute arose. The French under Governor DeLaBarre (1683) were preparing for war with a view to punishing the hostile Iroquois. The Fathers knew that their own lives were in danger and prepared to retire, leaving their chapels in charge of friendly Indians, and hoped to return when the storm had passed. A council was called by the French general at Cataroquoi attended by representatives of Oneidas, Onondagas and Cayugas. Mohawks and Senecas were induced by the English not to send delegates.

#### MARQUIS DE NONVILLE'S EXPEDITION.

In 1685 the Marquis De Nonville, DeLaBarre's successor as Governor of Canada, organized an expedition to subjugate the Iroquois. Father James DeLamberville was the only priest left on the missions at this time and DeNonville through him invited representatives to a council and then basely captured and imprisoned them. The priest was the innocent participant in the cruel deception, and the Onondagas allowed him to depart in peace. Thus after 20 years of successful existence the missions closed.

In 1687 DeNonville came into the Seneca Country, landing at Irondequoit with 1,600 French and 400 Indians. They came to Gannagaro and defeated a force of Senecas and destroyed the villages and immense quantities of corn.

After the peace of Ryswick, Father Bruyas went to Onondaga with the French representatives to negotiate an exchange of prisoners and the following year, 1701, attended a council of the Iroquois, but found the English Governor's influence too strongly exerted for his return. In 1702 however the Iroquois asked for missionaries. Father James DeLamberville went to Onondaga and Revs. Julien Garnier and Vaillant de Gueslis proceeded to the Seneca villages near the Genesee and in October 1702 chapels were opened.

#### DRIVEN OUT BY THE ENGLISH.

But in 1709 we find that the English succeeded in forcing them to leave the Iroquois country forever and to give up the field which had been so productive of joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain.

Their lives were not, however, wasted, even as regards permanent benefits to the red race, as the latter learned the sacredness of human life and the abomination of devouring the flesh of their fellow beings. They were taught that all men are brothers and children of the same father. They formed new ideas of the God of the Christian, Haw-wen-ne-yu, and Thoroniawagon, their old deity, was relegated to the class of genii or spirits.

#### AN IROQUOIS SAINT.

It was an Iroquois maiden, Catherine Tegakwitha, afterwards known as the Genevieve of Canada, that reached so high a degree of Christian perfection as to be enrolled among the beatified of the Catholic church, and her tomb at

the Sault on the St. Lawrence near Montreal is a shrine where thousands, Indians and whites, go annually to pay their tribute of respect to a holy virgin. (We mention her especially because Father Fremin administered the last sacraments to her.) Nor should we fail to speak of Garacontie, the Red Jacket of the Onondagas, the generous, devoted, magnanimous product of missionary zeal among the red forest children. "Is there a poor family in the town" he said, "or a poor widow, who can say that I did not use my authority to provide the help necessary to cultivate their fields and to gather their harvests? When fire destroyed their homes and consumed their goods, did I not help them to rebuild and replenish their stores? If I have done these things in the past through natural inclinations and through a motive of honor, I will continue to perform such honorable deeds through a higher motive, because I thus obey the express commands of the sovereign master of life."

CIVILIZATION'S DEBT TO THE HEROIC  
PRIESTS.

Pierron, Fremin, Chaumonot, Dablon, LeMoyne, Garnier, Bruyas, Carheil, Millet, Raffeix, Mesnard, DeGueslis and DeLamberville—Civilization owes something to these heroic priests. They blazed the way of progress through pathless forest. They left the first written record of these lovely hills, these fertile valleys, these placid lakes, these charming rivers, these rich and productive plains. Father LeMoyne discovered the salt wells of Syracuse, Onondaga lake, the Oswego river and a great portion of Central New York. Father Mesnard was the first to describe the beauties of the land of the Cayugas and the charming lakes along whose shores these people dwelt. Father Chaumonot was the first white

man to visit the homes of the Seneca nation and to tell the world of the pleasant valley of the Genesee. Father Hennepin was the first to describe the far-famed falls of Niagara, which have since been regarded the wonder of the world.

Our new formed Historical Society is spying about for work worthy of its lofty purpose. While our neighbors on the west are marking the grave of Daniel Shays, of a double Revolutionary fame, in the little cemetery at Scottsburg, and indicating with marble slab the temporary grave of two or three of Sullivan's men at the head of Conesus lake, let us remember that here at our doors are places at once sacred and historic, where noble, self-sacrificing priests gave their lives with the solemn convictions:

That in even savage bosoms  
There are longings, yearnings, strivings,  
For the good they comprehend not  
That their feeble hands and helpless  
Catch God's right hand in the darkness  
And are lifted up and strengthened.

The Indian missionaries among the Iroquois were men endowed with virtues that made them famous in the annals of the world, and their lives are all to men a shining light of heroic self-sacrifice and noble deeds.

THEY SHOULD HAVE MONUMENTS.

One beautiful summer day I wheeled along the road from Arlington to Lexington and Concord, and stopped to read, by the wayside, the plain and substantial granite markers that tell of the heroic feats of strength and valor performed by the "Embattled farmers" in the gray dawn of that morning of revolution and resistance. On another day—an August day in 1898—I stood upon the old walls of Chester and fancied myself back in 1645, looking

out with Charles I. from the commemorated spot and watching the defeat of his arms on Rowton Moor. It is indeed a worthy impulse of the human heart that prompts us to mark the places made memorable as scenes of stirring events. Coming down to our own historic surroundings—while the beneficence of a thoughtful fellow citizen is telling the present and future generations the story of the mighty past by “sermons in stone,” let us hope that some of the citizens of Ontario County will be inspired to erect at least a few simple tablets calculated to repeat to the passerby that here, a century before the Revolution, Garnier dedicated his first rude chapel, Fremin preached the word of God, or Pierron performed the office of his sacred ministry; here in stubborn soil were sown the first seeds of Christian faith and hope and love, that knew no bounds of space or race, but were illimitable as God. The invincible power of a mighty purpose made those Jesuit fathers grand inspiring examples. Their lives were an epic. Centuries hence they may find their Homer. Their souls go marching on forever.

JAMES T. DOUGHERTY.







